

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 0248

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, KU

SUBJ: STAFFING OF USLOK

REF: A) STATE 006343/100121Z JAN 76 B) KUWAIT 0249 (151037Z JAN 76)

SUMMARY: EMBASSY COMMENTS ON PROBLEMS LIKELY TO BE EXPERIENCED BY IHAWK TEAM VISITING KUWAIT LATE JANUARY IN ATTEMPTING TO DISCUSS STAFFING OF USLOK WITH GOK. RECOMMENDS TWO ALTERNATIVE COURSES OF ACTION BELIEVED MORE LIKELY TO RESULT IN EARLIER AND MORE FAVORABLE RESOLUTION USLOK MANNING PROBLEM. END SUMMARY

1. REFTEL (A) ADVISED THAT DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND DEFENSE HAVE DETERMINED THAT A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING IS UNNECESSARY TO PROCEED WITH THE ASSIGNMENT OF PERSONNEL ON A PERMANENT BASIS TO USLOK. EMBASSY ALSO INFORMED THAT DOD TEAM VISITING KUWAIT IN JANUARY WILL DISCUSS ISSUE OF USLOK STAFFING AND SUPPORT WITH GOK OFFICIALS. PRESUME DOD TEAM REFERRED TO IS GROUP SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH GOK ON IHAWK PROGRAM PROBLEMS.

2. IF ABOVE ASSUMPTION IS CORRECT, I STRONGLY RECOMMEND AGAINST PROPOSED ACTION FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF TEAM VISIT IS TO DISCUSS CONTENTIOUS ISSUES RELATED TO IHAWK PROCUREMENT. KUWAITI OFFICIALS ARE DISSATISFIED WITH FMS CASES TO BE REVIEWED.

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ED AND WILL SEEK MAJOR REVISIONS. GOK MINDEF PERSONALLY EMBARRASS-

ED BY GREATER THAN ANTICIPATED COSTS AND WILL BE IN NO MOOD TO ACCEPT CRITICISM OR LISTEN WITH FAVOR TO OTHER COSTLY PROPOSALS AD-

VANCED BY USG. PURPOSE OF TEAM VISIT IN GOK EYES IS TO SET IHAWK PROGRAM RIGHT AND NO OTHER. IF ISSUE USLOK RAISED, MINDEF IS LIKELY TO CHALLENGE PAST USG PERFORMANCE IN PROVIDING PERSONNEL FOR AGREED PROGRAMS (TAFT FOR TOW AND WEAPONS LIAISON OFFICE FOR A-4) AND PROTEST OUR FAILURE TO SATISFY OUTSTANDING REQUESTS FOR OTHER US PERSONNEL (E.G., TAFT FOR SUPPLY AND AUTOMOTIVE MAINTENANCE) AND STUDIES (COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTER). THEY QUESTION THE DESIRABILITY OF THE TEAM ADDRESSING SUCH PERIPHERAL ISSUES. TIMING SIMPLY IS NOT AUSPICIOUS.

2. EVEN MORE IMPORTANT, IT APPEARS WE ARE NOT YET READY TO ENTER INTO SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS ON STAFFING OF USLOK. VARIOUS STAFFING PATTERNS PREVIOUSLY EXAMINED INTERNALLY WITHIN USG NO LONGER SEEM CONSISTENT WITH STATE/DEFENSE VIEWS OR REPRESENT USLOK NEEDS AND GOK DESICLS. APGARENT DECISION NOT TO PROVIDE OR TO DELAY CONSIDERATION OF PROVIDING HELP FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF NAVY, PROVISION OF SP ARTILLERY AND ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS AND ASSISTANCE IN PROVIDING THE TYPE OF COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTER DESIRED BY GOK MAKES SOME PROPOSALS OBSOLETE OPSCONTENTIOUS. DUPLICATION OF SOME POSITIONS SOUGHT (E.G., IHAWK OFFICER UNDER BOTH USLOK AND IHAWK FIELD OFFICE) WILL APPEAR UNNECESSARY AND CONFUSE THE GOK. UNTIL WE DECIDE PRECISELY WHAT WE WANT USLOK TO DO (AND NOT TO DO) IT WOULD SEEYP PREMATURE TO ENTER INTO DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOK.

3. DEPARTMENT IS IN ERROR IN SUGGESTING IN REFTEL (A) THAT GOK IS RELUCTANT TO SUPPORT USLOK. WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT ADEQUATE SUPPORT AND MONEY WILL NOT BE PROVIDED. NOW THAT CONFUSING (TO GOK) ISSUE OF MOU HAS BEEN RESOLVED, WE SUSPECT THAT AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED. HOWEVER, IN MOVING TOWARDS AN AGREEMENT (LETTER OF OFFER) WE MUST CAREFULLY CONSIDER WHAT THE GOK WANTS US TO DO AND WHAT WE ARE WILLING TO DO. WE MUST ALSO BE UNDER NO ILLUSION THAT THE GOK WILL ACCEPT A LETTER OF OFFER WHICH SIMPLY STATES "TWENTY MAN YEARS OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE ADVISORY SERVICES" WILL BE PROVIDED. MINISTER WILL WANT TO KNOW PRECISELY HOW MANY PEOPLE YBS SOUGHT, AT LEAST INITIALLY, AND WHAT SERVICE EACH WILL PROVIDE.

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4. I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE MUCH MORE PRODUCTIVE, TIME WOULD BE SAVED AND THE RISK OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS GREATLY REDUCED IF THIS MATTER IS PRESENTED TO THE MINISTER BY ME AND IN WRITING (ONLY THE MINISTER WILL MAKE THE FINAL DECISION). THE IMMEDIATE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM (REFTEL B) PROVIDES THE TEXT OF A PROPOSED LETTER, WITH ENCLOSURES, WHICH I RECOMMEND I BE AUTHORIZED TO SEND TO THE MINISTER SOONEST SOLICPGSNG HIS AGREEMENT FOR THE

PREPARATION OF A LETTER OF OFFER FOR THE TYPE OF USLOK ESTABLISHMENT THE EMBASSY NOW BELIEVES CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT U.S. INTERESTS. (PROPOSED STAFFING ELIMINATES DUPLICATION AND FOCUSES ON IMMEDIATE ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH ON-GOING PROGRAMS.) IF THIS APPROACH IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND DEFENSE, I RECOMMEND THAT A SPECIAL STATE/DOD TEAM BE ASSEMBLED TO COME TO KUWAIT TO MAKE A FORMAL, DETAILED PRESENTATION TO THE MINISTER ON THE SUBJECT, BUT NOT BEFORE IRRITANTS OF IHAWK PROGRAM ARE RESOLVED.
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